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PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE
UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON
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Agenda item 2 (b) of plenary

PREPARATIONS FOR THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT ON THE BASIS OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 44/228 AND TAKING INTO ACCOUNT OTHER RELEVANT GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTIONS: RELEVANT ACTIONS OF INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND OTHER BODIES OF RELEVANCE TO THE PREPARATORY PROCESS

Letter dated 20 November 1991 from the Minister of Environment, Construction and Urban Planning of Côte d'Ivoire addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development

I have the honour to transmit herewith a copy of the documents produced by the Second African Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development, held at Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, from 11 to 14 November 1991 (see annexes I and II, transmitted in French and English).

I hope that the preparations for the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development will accommodate the environmental concerns of all the world's peoples.

The Common African Position adopted at Abidjan on 14 November 1991 is yet another indication of the determination of the States members of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) to ensure that Africa occupies its rightful place at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.

I should like to take this opportunity to thank you on behalf of the group of African States and on behalf of my Government in particular for your unceasing efforts in support of all of Africa.

ANNEX I

AFRICAN COMMON POSITION

ON

ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

Adopted at the Second Regional African Ministerial Preparatory Conference for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development to be held at Rio de Janeiro, Brazil from 1 to 12 June 1992

AFRICAN COMMON POSITION

ON

ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

PREAMBLE AND GENERAL PRINCIPLES

1. We, the Governments of African countries represented by our Ministers and Senior Officials responsible for Environment and Development, in mutual consultation with representatives of African Non-Governmental Organizations, meeting in Abidjan, Cote D'Ivoire from 11 to 14 November 1991, for the second Regional Preparatory Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) to be held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 1-12 June 1992 as an Earth Summit on Environment and Development recognize that humanity has a common heritage that is ecologically interdependent and that for a sustainable common future we must individually and collectively protect this common heritage. Our meeting in Abidjan consolidates the African Common Position on Environment and Development as preliminarily expressed during our first Regional Conference held in Cairo from 11 - 16th July 1991.

2. We recall that by OAU resolution Cm/Res. 1361 (LIV) the Fifty-fourth Ordinary Session of the Council of Ministers in Abuja, Nigeria, from 27 May to 1 June, 1991 requested the Secretary-General of the OAU to pursue jointly with the Executive Secretary of the ECA, the Executive Director of UNEP, the preparation of the African region in the UNCED and take all the necessary steps to safe-guard The African Common Position both during the preparatory

meetings as well as during the conference itself. This was in keeping with ECA resolution 712(XXVI) of May, 1991 which called on the Executive Secretary of ECA and the Secretary-General of the OAU to jointly assist African countries for UNCED.

3. We are also responding in the spirit of African integration and inter-dependence as reflected in the Charter of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the existing treaties of African sub-regional economic groupings and in the recent Treaty establishing the African Economic Community which was signed in Abuja, Nigeria in June 1991.

4. We recognize the need to encourage, foster, and step-up dialogue emphasizing close links between industrial commercial and environmental policy. Such dialogue should be based, among others , on the importance of international economics and the implementation of sustainable development notably through the applications of regulations and use of commercial instruments for any action involving environmental protection and conservation of the environment.

5. In addition, we are aware that there is a close link between development and environment and that sustainable development has to be based on environmental protection measures. We are commited to prepare and implement development programmes which take account of the relationship between development and protection of the environment.

6. We have within the UNCED regional preparatory process embarked on a series of important and critical activities of concern to the African region.

These activities have been carried out in recognition of the strategic concern to integrate environment and development, and the need to evolve an African Common Position as our contribution, to the major policy decisions which will be adopted by the Rio Earth Summit.

7. In this context our Ministers and Senior Officials responsible for environment and development, in mutual consultations with Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) including those of Women and Youth/from forty-eight out of the fifty-one countries of the Region met in Cairo - Arab Republic of Egypt, from 11 to 16 July 1991 for the first Regional Preparatory Conference for UNCED. (Document ECA/UNCED.Cairo/Prep. Conf/91).

8. In preparation of our common position, we have benefitted from the environmental guidelines drawn from the following documents : the Monrovia Declaration (1979), the Lagos Plan of Action (1980), the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN), Cairo (1985) and the critical experiences that led to the adoption of the African Priority Programme for Economic Recovery (APPER) and the United Nations Programme of Action for 99rican Economic Recovery and Development (UN-PAAERD).

9. These provided the basis for the implementation of the recommendations of the World Commission on Environment and Development and the UNEP Perspectives for the Environment to the Year 2000 and Beyond, particularly the first Regional Conference on Environment and Sustainable Development in Africa that was held in Kampala, Uganda, from 12 to 16 June 1989. This Conference was held with the Ministers of Environment, of Economic Planning and of Education as well as with representatives of NGOs, including those of Women and Youth.

10. The outcome of the Kampala Conference provided the spirit and orientation of the OAU Pan African Conference on Environment and Sustainable Development held in Bamako, Mali from 23 to 30 January 1991. The Bamako Conference and the ensuing Bamako Commitment enriched the Kampala Agenda with the sustainability of economic growth, security of financial resources and the improvement of the quality of life and habitat as priority areas of action.

11. We have also benefitted from the spirit of environmental awareness which led to the adoption of the Bamako Commitment and the Bamako Convention on the ban of the imports into Africa and the control of trans boundary movement of hazardous wastes within Africa by the OAU Heads of State and Government. Additionally we have also benefitted from Consultative meeting of the twenty-two Sudano-Sahelian countries held in Cairo, Egypt from 8 to 10 July 1991, the ECO'92 Public Forum (9-10 July 1991) and from the Statement of the member States of the Southern Africa Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC) delivered during the Third Session of the UNCED preparatory Committee as well as from the report of the meeting of the Pan African Symposium on Science and Technology for the Environment and Development, Abidjan 5-8 August 1991.

12. The two regional preparatory conferences and related activities were part of the global implementation of United Nations General Assembly resolution 44/228 and other relevant UN General Assembly resolutions on the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) and as a follow-up to the Report of the World Commission on Environment (WCED) and the UNEP perspectives for the Environment to the Year 2000 and Beyond. These were also a demonstration of the increased awareness of environmental issues in our countries and the determination of the region to play an active role in joint

global environmental action. Out of these activities and review of our environmental concerns, an African Environment and Development Agenda (AEDA) for sustaining development in the region has emerged.

13. We reaffirm the legitimate rights of our peoples to health, development and rights to environment.

14. we reaffirm that a sustainable development requires for its implementation initiatives of the political level, as well as collaboration with NGO's, women and youth organisations, and the private sector. These initiatives will facilitate the elaboration and implementation of regional and sub-regional programmes. In the context of sustainable development, concrete measures to achieve common objectives should be defined for an effective management of different eco-systems, economic sectors and geographic regions.

15. We emphasize that sustainable development requires of our countries:

(i) national political commitment to ensure that development processes do not destroy the resource base or which future development will depend;

(ii) redefinition of national development priorities to alleviate constraints imposed by current international economic conditions and their debt burden.

16. Sustainable development will make it possible for African countries to overcome the constraints which obstruct the process of sustainable development of new and renewed ressources. In order to embark on a course of sustainable development, African countries are obliged to meet the following challenges :

(i) access to science and technology and know-how;

(ii) have the capacity to overcome the constraints imposed by the worsening terms of trade and debt.

17. Thus, we emphasise that our commitment to sustainable development and protection of natural resources and environment can be achieved only if our countries have the capacity to do so. To do this, our countries need an effective international solidarity, real cooperation and mutual understanding.

18. In the absence of these necessary conditions it will be difficult for African countries to face with the same spirit of initiative, willingness and determination the problems of development and the protection of the environment.

19. We deplore the numerous consequences of desertification and drought which hamper the development efforts of populations, thereby compelling them to adopt environment-damaging survival strategies and emphasize the need to arrive at new and innovative measures capable of reversing the trend. We reaffirm the sovereign right of states over their natural resources, and their use for the development, and well-being of their peoples as well as the need

for a permanent contribution of African forests, to major global ecological equilibriums notably through a reduction of the effect of greenhouse gases. These forests embody one of the richest biological diversity of the world and consequently constitute a means of future development of medical sciences, bio-.echnology and gene conservation.

20. We regret to note that poverty, debt and stringent conditions related to international trade makes it difficult to conserve these forests, this biodiversity and this common heritage of mankind.

21. We are convinced that sustainable development must be supported by measures aimed at satisfying essential needs and aspirations of all populations without compromising those that will be required by future generations to aspire for a decent living. In this regard, we note and reaffirm that investment made towards the conservation of the environment is a responsibility not only of governments, but also of all groups and living populations, that derive benefit from resources linked to the environment. We consider that this is of very great importance, for we do realize that to ensure a social management of the environement, an integrated, intersectoral and thus interdisciplinary approach is essential.

22. Poverty and over-exploitation of the natural resources in Africa are interlinked and should therefore be conceived as some of the major forces against effective policy options for sound environmental management. Accordingly, the development of specific and alternative measures for a long term perspective policy for the eradication of poverty as well as the removal of other developmental constraints becomes a major strategic concern for Africa within the UNCED process.

23. Environmental degradation and the depletion of resources threaten Africa's biological systems as well as human health and the quality of human life. Unsustainable patterns of production and consumption, particularly in the industrialized countries which do not reflect adequate concern for environmental conservation and rehabilitation are also at the root of the numerous environmental/problems, notably in Africa which constitutes a substantial portion of the global ecosystem from which the developed world has been benefitting for its own development. To this end, the integration of environmental dimensions into development becomes imperative.

24. While aiming at achieving Africa's sustainable development goals through pursuing sound environmental policies, the African Environment and Development Agenda must operate to enhance global action for environment and sustainability in social and economic development. The African Environment Agenda should strive to interact with the global environmental follow-up as of now into the UNCED-1992. The crises that abound in the region must serve as warnings and cause for immediate remedial action, both at the regional and global levels and subsequent follow-up to and beyond UNCED-1992. This will require serious and determined shifts in policy and decision-making for environmental management as an integral part of development planning on the part of African countries on the one hand, and greater North-South and South-South co-operation on the other.

25. The importance of mobilizing all the global resources for environment and development programme activities has been greatly emphasized. It has also been emphasized that one of the surest way of doing this is to democratize decision making and involvement in development activities and environmental management. NGOs and the private sector, including trade unions, business and similar groups must be encouraged to be involved in this process.

26. We are committed not only to implementing policies of a sustainable development and an ecologically rational management of our resources but also to approach environment and development problems in Africa including activities and negotiations during and after the UNCED process within the context of our Common Position. In this regard, we call on the international community to participate effectively and fully in the protection, restoration and conservation of the environment in Africa. All UN agencies should co-ordinate their activities and work together to assist member states in dealing with Africa's developmental and environmental problems.

SECTION I

AFRICA'S PRIORITY CONCERNS

27. We reaffirm that Africa's priority concerns relating to environment and development are varied, indications of which are highlighted in the Bamako Commitment. They are :

(a) the non-achievement of food security which is resulting in famine and malnutrition;

(b) the lack of energy security;

(c) problems relating to non-achievement of the sustainability of economic growth and productive employment;

(d) the insecurity and instability of the flow of financial resources for development;

(e) the improvement of the quality of life and habitat.

28. Despite the considerable efforts made by the African countries to resolve these priority problems in improving their economic results through reforms and the search for alternate solutions to structural adjustment programmes, the global performances of africa have remained generally poor and irregular and the living conditions of the poor and vulnerable groups in particular the children in african societies have deteriorated during this period. The concerted efforts of African countries have generally been hampered by the mediocre results of the agricultural sector due to the misbehaviour of the agricultural sector which remains the pivot of the growth of the majority of African economies.

29. These problems are worsened by deepening poverty and population pressures, the inadequate analytical and institutional capacity in the area of environment and economic development, the irrational management of tropical forest resources, savannah woodlands and water resources, and the adverse effects of anthropogenous and natural disasters which have perpetuated the deterioration of African economies and the environment, and constitute one of the basic elements of one common position.

30. We have, in particular, identified certain key factors which are major constraints to economic development in Africa :

(i) Declining agricultural production as a result of a variety of factors;

(ii) Inappropriate production techniques in agriculture, livestock and mining and industry;

(iii) High dependence on primary commodities and the collapse of commodity prices as well as the prevailing unfair trade practices in international markets;

(iv) Inappropriate policies and measures to address the African economic crisis;

(v) The external debt burden of $270 billion which in 1990 cost Africa $23 billion to service;

(vi) Activities of trans-national corporations with high financial as well as ecological costs;

(vii) The net resource outflow from Africa to the rest of the world;

(viii) The impact on natural resources of demographic changes and population pressures.

(ix) Negative impacts of natural and man-made disasters.

(x) Environmental and development problems encountered by landlocked countries.

31. Recycling of the debt by facilitating the setting up of funds at the national level directed towards the implementation and realization of environmental protection programmes, improvement of the quality of life, social welfare and sustainable development could be a means and judicious mechanism for lightening the debt burden and facilitating the commitment of our counties to sustainable development and environmental protection.

32. Economic recovery and development in Africa depend primarily on the policies and actions of African countries as well as the fairness of the international economic system. In this regard, and as the UN Secretary General pointed out in his report on UNPAAERD, three main factors influencing

the situation are commodity prices, resource flows and external debt. This has led the UN Secretary General to call for an African Diversification Fund for Technical Assistance (ADFTS) to be set up to ease the chronic dependence of Africa on primary commodities. We consider this call to be opportune to merit support from the international community. We also support and endorse the following measures :

(i) Cancellation of official bi-lateral debt;

(ii) Cancellation of semi-official/export credit debts owed by African countries;

(iii) Substantial reduction, with the assistance of donor countries, of debt owed to multilateral financial institutions which now account for about 40% of Sub-Saharan debt servicing obligations.

(iv) Ecologically rational utilization of natural resources through market mechanisms that enhance the economic value of products.

(v) Allocation of new and additional resources for the implementation of Agenda 21.

33. In order to have a tool for measuring sustainable growth, it is necessary and urgent to overhaul our system of economic so as to incorporate a system of accounting of natural resources which remains to be created. Such a tool would make it possible to show to what extent development activities affect the degradation of the environment and natural resource upon which future development depends.

34. We reaffirm that in matters of environment and development, the priorities of Africa in the areas highlighted in the Bamako Commitment including issues relating to ignorance, poverty and management especially through the strengthening and development of national institutions constitute the basis of key elements of our common position.

35. The different challenges facing Africa in environment and development therefore require that the ecological aspects betaken into consideration in the formulation and implementation of economic policies and strategies at the national, subregional and regional levels.

36. In view of the critical role of the Environment in growth and development of the African economies, we intend to participate in the UNCED negotiations process in a spirit of cooperation and solidarity with other nations and countries making-up mankind but without compromising our interests given the critical economic situation facing the continent. We believe in and call for a new era of development strategies that emphasise economic growth which combine poverty alleviation and environmental protection.

SECTION II

AFRICAN ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

37. We have after careful consideration with the participation of our partners in development agreed on the African Environment and Development Agenda (AEDA). This Agenda comprises the strategies, priority actions programmes and negotiation mechanisms which Africa will implement in order to achieve sustainable development nationally and regionally so as to contribute to the achievement of global sustainable development.

38. In the desire for consistency, the African Environmental and Development Agenda should, therefore, dictate the tone of what governments and development agencies including those of the UN system must do in Africa in order to achieve sustainable development. They must act as a team, each working out how best its capabilities can contribute to the package of national, sub-regional and regional development programmes with strong environment components, in their different initiatives.

39. This is a difficult challenge facing Africa, the UN and its institutions. Environment and sustainable development in the 1990s and beyond will call for considerable resource requirements and strong institutional and technological support as well as the enhancement of training and research activities and capabilities. Ideally, all support for additional resources and technology transfer and adaptation would enable Africa to play an effective role in global, regional and national programmes as well as the enhancement of training and research activities and capabilities.

40. Africa, in its various programmes stressed action among African countries and African inter-dependence on environmental management. Africa must, therefore, respond to environmental management responsibilities both within the national, regional, and the global context. In this connection development agencies working in Africa must continue to fulfil their mandates on social and economic development, duly integrating environmental concerns.

41. We reaffirm that eliminating poverty is a major element in combating famine and malnutrition and for reducing the pressure on natural resources and the environment. Conscious of this fact, our objective is, therefore, to reverse the critical food scarcities confronting a large number of our countries and to promote local initiatives by concrete actions aimed at both increasing agricultural production and reducing food losses as well as improving the quality of production. We, therefore, renew our commitment to the FAO's "Programme of Action on African Agriculture - the next 25 Years". In this light, Africa expects effective support from the international community.

42. We, therefore, emphasize the importance of participation in order to ensure that the public mobilizes itself to effect political change consistent with sustainable development. We will include these actions in our national and sub-regional development plans and require that they should also be included for support from the resources of UNCED-1992 Agenda 21.

43. It is our desire that the Programmes (listed below) of this Common Position be included in UNCED Agenda 21 as the framework for the priority activities for the Africa region. We are convinced that the positive and effective contribution of the African community in the global development of the environment, cannot take place without addressing the cross-sectoral issues involved.

44. The priority programmes of this Agenda include the following:

Food self sufficiency and food security,

Efficient and equitable use of water resources,

Management of marine and coastal resources, as well as the protection of a marine environment,

Securing greater energy self sufficiency,

Managing demographic change and population pressures,

Development of human settlement; planning and management of human resources,

Optimizing industrial production, pollution, prevention and control,

Management of biodiversity and bio-technology,

Mitigating global warming and climate change,

Rational management of forest resources,

Reversing desertification in Africa,

Environmentally sound development of mineral resources,

Popular participation and enhancement of the role of NGOs, youth and women,

Development of environmental legislation,

Capacity building, environmental education, training and public awareness,

Management of solid and hazardous wastes,

Additional resources for environmental rehabilitation

Poverty eradication,

Drought monitoring,

Development of science and technology,

Health implications of development.

Mitigating the impacts of refugees on environment and development.

It was also agreed that these programmes will be formulated in accordance with the guidelines embodied in Paper 49 approved at the Third Session of the Preparatory Committee of UNCED (UNCED A/CONF.151.PC/h49).

SECTION III

THE AFRICAN ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT AGENDA AND POST CONFERENCE FOLLOW-UP

44. We recognize that this opportunity offered by UNCED call for a new spirit of international cooperation to tackle jointly this immense challenge. In a world of increasing global interdependence, Africa's future is inextricably linked to those of other continents. We are prepared to play our part in the context of new international relations so as to better defend our interests.

45. We also commit ourselves to:

(i) Integrate environmental criteria systematically into every aspect of economic decision-making so as to make development truly sustainable.

(ii) Take necessary steps to improve the economic situation of our people by placing the provision of the basic necessities of life: food, water, shelter, energy, security, education, health at the highest political level.

(iii) Effectively participate in the negotiation of the conventions and agreements.

(iv) Formulate and implement development programmes within the framework of the imperative link between environment and development for achieving our development goals.

(v) Build our infrastructure to cope with our future responsibilities, especially technological and manpower development, particularly regarding management of natural and man-made hazards and the development of information networks;

(vi) Support the promotion of Science and Technology with special emphasis through different ways and means, especially through bi-lateral, multi-lateral, regional or international programmes on research and development;

(vii) Implement our Environment and Development Agenda;

(viii) Accelerate the dialogue on the links between environment and trade policies to focus on the role of international trade in promoting sustainable development through the application of trade rules and instruments to environmental measures.

46. We also commit ourselves to ensure individual and collective implementation of these strategies so as to realise the objectives of integrating environment into development at all levels of the African society.

47. Accordingly African government will strengthen their capacity to negotiate in multi-lateral forum. In addition they will pursue vigourous measures for eradication of poverty.

48. We are convinced that for Africa, the approaches to UNCED-1992 are anchored in :

(a) Institution building and human capacity to implement its Environment and Development Agenda;

(b) The imperative of popular participation and full democratization at all levels of governance, the decision making process and programme implementation;

(c) Economic empowerment of the region as a whole, particularly of individual countries and social groups, especially women and people at grassroots level by allowing them to participate more effectively in matters of environment and development; additionally access to credit and development investment to promote the principle of equity is also imperative; this is required if growing mass poverty and the problem of human resources development are to be effectively addressed;

(d) The effective co-ordination of development and environment programmes and policies at the sub-regional and regional levels.

49. In this regard, it is of great importance that we endeavour to rationalize, reform and strengthen our institutions for environmental management, including administrative structures that will reinforce programme

implementation, promote training and manpower development, facilitate inter-action between all concerned, monitoring and evaluation activities and, thereby, enhance the impact of programmes.

50. Consequently, we recommend that the Earth Summit :

(a) adopts institutional and other mechanisms that would guarantee the application of the programmes in Agenda 21 in order to achieve effective environmental protection which will prevent the world from self destruction;

(b) makes the UNCED process one of enhancement of natural resources for North-South and South-South dialogue and co-operation in environmental management and the facilitation of the flow of resources and for the promotion of genuine global inter-dependence and solidarity;

(c) Encourage, support and strengthen:

(i) National institutions and mechanisms for implementing environmental programmes;

(ii) African regional and sub-regional programmes on development and environment;

(iii) African intergovernmental institutions notably OAU, ADB, AMCEN, CILSS, IGADD and SADCC.

(iv) UN bodies with headquarters in Africa;

(v) The regional offices of UN organization located in Africa;

(vi) Specialized and other development agencies operating in the region so that they can continue to implement their mandates on social and economic development.

51. We reaffirm our strong attachment to the location of the UNEP headquarters in Africa and that it be equally strengthened. UNEP's regional presence should further be strengthened so as to enhance its role in supporting the environmental programmes of member States.

52. We are further determined to strengthen international programmes, institutions and laws leading up to the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development and the follow-up thereto. It is our aspiration that the Conference should usher in a new era of international co-operation and action for putting our humanity on a sustainable development path as we move into the next century.

53. We further recognize that environmental policies must be based on a precautionary principle that should govern the development and use of science and technology for implementing environmental measures by anticipating, preventing and attacking the causes of environmental degradation, even if firm scientific proof is yet lacking because proof may come too late. Arguments based on "reasonable doubt" should not be used as an excuse for postponing measures to prevent environmental degradation or address emerging issues such as climate change and global warming. We acknowledge the need to address the special environmental problem of small islands of the African region.

54. We further recognize the legitimate right of African countries to exploit their natural resources for development purposes and that activities to protect the environment should not frustrate the development process. To this end we re-affirm our commitment to continue to participate in the management and conservation of global environmental commons for this and future generations. The protection of our natural resources should not be used as a pre-condition by developing and funding agencies for financing the development of our countries.

55. We affirm that the difficult economic environment confronting Africa, particularly mass poverty and crushing foreign debt burden, collapse of commodity trade, inadequate transfer of appropriate and environmentally sound technology, the reverse flow of financial resources, backward scientific and technological capabilities have all led to severe constraints on the continent's development capacity.

56. Inspite of these limitations, we are determined to participate fully in the global approach to environmental management for the common future of all humanity, and to redress the global inequalities that plague and hamper fruitful mutual international co-operation. On this score, we expect our partners in global environmental management for sustainable development to adopt the polluter pays principle in ensuring that our participation is fruitful.

57. It is on the basis of this approach that Africa will strengthen its capacity in order to participate fruitfully in the negotiations on global strategies on environment and development in the interest of Africa's Environment and Development Agenda. Within the framework of the regional

commitment to national and collective self-reliant development, the priorities and strategies adopted by member States will facilitate global environmental management with adequate internal and external flow of resources for this purpose.

58. We must, under these circumstances, constructively and collectively discuss our approaches to solving development and environment problems. Hence, Africa will participate actively in the UNCED dialogue and in negotiations for an Earth Charter, UNCED conventions and Agenda 21, that should spell out the ethics of inter-generational development and the conservation of a healthy environment :

(i) Establishment of an ecologically-oriented Diversification Fund for promoting structural transformation of African economies;

(ii) Development of an environmentally sound Regional Energy Strategy, particularly new and renewable energy for Africa with the necessary new and additional resources to implement it;

(iii) The prohibition of the importation of toxic and other hazardous wastes in Africa in consonance with the Bamako Convention and in the spirit of the Basel Convention;

(iv) The adoption of a strategy for promoting popular participation and ensuring the implementation of the principle of putting the people first in the formulation and implementation of development programmes for addressing development and environment on a sustainable basis;

(v) The formulation and signing of an International Convention on Halting Desertification in Africa by the creation, through collective international effort, of green-belts north and south of the Sahara and in the Kalahari desert. This should be done bearing in mind that, in keeping with the recent conclusions of the IPCC, global effort on afforestation and reforestation could also reduce the high level of CO^2

(vi) Releasing of resources for environmental conservation by total cancellation of bilateral debt for African countries which are among the most underdeveloped among Third World countries;

(vii) Revitalization of Commodity Agreements and addressing the commodity problem with a view to guaranteeing minimum prices and, consequently, enhancing the income-generating ability of producing countries;

(viii) Insist on the enforcement of the transfer of clean technology;

(ix) Support and encourage the protection of mineral and biological resources of African countries.

(x) Strengthening of scientific and development research as well as enhancing the capacity of technological irrigation in the various areas related to environment and development.

59. In addition, we support the establishment of an International Fund for financing environmentally sound and sustainable development in Africa. Such fund should be financed through :

(i) International financial organizations;

(ii) Creditor countries committing certain percentage of the Third World's outstanding external debts;

(iii) Voluntary contributions by African or other countries.

60. In this regard, we urge ADB to develop the modalities for the management and utilization of such a fund.

61. Furthermore we note the establishment of the Global Environment Facility and request that its mandates be expanded to include desertification and other areas of priority concern to Africa and that its governance be transparent and broad based to include developing countries, particularly Africa.

ANNEX II

THE ABIDJAN DECLARATION

We, the African Governments represented by our Ministers and Senior Officials responsible for the environment and development, meeting in Abidajan on 13 and 14 November 1991 as part of the preparations for the United Nations Conference on the Environment and Development scheduled to be held in Rio de Janeiro from 1 to 12 June 1991,

- Underscore the importance of the stakes of this conference and their consequences in the short, medium and long terms on the environment and development at the national, subregional and global levels.

- Reaffirm our willingness and determination to ensure that this conference clearly and concretely translates, through appropriate decisions, the ideas and reflexions contained in the relevant resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly, especially, resolution 44/228.

- We further recognize the legitimate right of African countries to exploit their natural resources for development purposes and that activities to protect the environment should not frustrate the development process. To this end, we re-affirm our commitment to

continue to participate in the management and conservation of global environmental commons for this and future generations. The protection of our natural resources should not be used as a pre-condition by developing and funding agencies for financing the development of our countries.

- We underline that we expect from the countries attending the Earth Summit, the following :

  (i) The effective and concrete translation of commitments which will be undertaken by the countries of the North for the benefit of developing countries.

  (ii) The more effective participation of African countries in multi-lateral agencies dealing with environment and sustainable development.

  (iii) The setting up of mechanisms and devices for the immediate implementation of Agenda 21 and its follow-up.

  (iv) The creation of appropriate mechanisms to facilitate technology transfer at concessional and preferential conditions, as well as new and additional financing for sustainable development in Africa.

(v) The setting up of appropriate financial mechanisms for the implementation of each Convention and Protocol relating to environment and development.

Moreover, we affirm our commitment to :

(a) Systematically take account of the environment in all its aspects during decision-making in matters relating to the economy, with a view to making development really sustainable.

(b) Strengthen appropriate measures to improve the situation of our populations, by including in our policies, the meeting of the basic needs of life : food, domestic energy, water supply, housing, security, education and health.

(c) Encourage and promote science and technology through various methods, particularly, through bilateral and multilateral, regional or international programmes.

(d) Encourage and enhace international economic exchanges by taking into account their impact on the environment, in order to strengthen the role of these exchanges in the promotion of sustainable development.

(e) Promote the formulation and the implementation of programmes related to research, information, sensitization, education and training for the population at all levels, and particularly involving women, youth and NGOs in the management of the Environment and Sustainable Development.

Abidjan, 14 November 1991.